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ILLEGAL ISRAELI ACTIONS IN OCCUPIED EAST JERUSALEM AND THE REST OF THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

Letter dated 20 August 1997 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In follow-up to resolutions ES-10/2 and ES-10/3, adopted overwhelmingly by Member States during the tenth emergency special session, on 25 April 1997 and the resumed tenth emergency special session, on 15 July 1997, as well as the report of the Secretary-General presented in accordance with resolution ES-10/2 (A/ES-10/6 and Corr.1 and Add.1). I have been instructed to bring the following to your attention.

The situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, continues to deteriorate seriously as a result of the Israeli Government's collective punitive measures and actions against the Palestinian people and the Palestinian National Authority, including the closure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the continued siege of Bethlehem and Jerusalem for the past three weeks. Further, Israel, the occupying Power, continues to build the new settlement at Jabal Abu Ghneim, confiscate land, expand existing settlements and demolish Palestinian homes. Israel has also continued to impose additional measures aimed at changing the character, demographic composition and legal status of Jerusalem. All of the above-mentioned measures and actions constitute a flagrant violation of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth emergency special session as well as of other relevant Security Council and Assembly resolutions.

Furthermore, private contributions by institutions and individuals in some countries continue in support of illegal Israeli settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem. The most flagrant examples, in addition to that of the Days Inn Hotel chain mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General, are the actions of two individuals, Yosef Gutnik and Irving Moskowitz, citizens of Australia and the United States of America, respectively. Although those two Member States did not vote in

favour of the above-mentioned resolutions, they are nevertheless High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention and hence are responsible for ensuring respect for the Convention in accordance with common article 1.

In accordance with the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session, Member States have a responsibility to prevent support for any settlement activities, including support generated by the private sector. In paragraph 6 of resolution ES-10/3, the General Assembly recommends to Member States that they actively discourage activities which directly contribute to any construction or development of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, as these activities contravene international law. Accordingly, Member States are expected to take measures with regard to contributions by the private sector, including individuals and companies, as part of their national responsibility to ensure respect for international treaties and to uphold the principles of international law.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as an official document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Marwan A. JILANI
Chargé d'affaires a.i.